



## Kaiserslautern Military Community Retiree Activities Office

### **Fact Sheet: Burial Benefits for Military Retiree (Veteran)**

Most of this info is from the VA Handbook but to save you from referring to it, you can read on if you are not already aware of your Veteran Burial Benefits. Many veterans and their spouses think that the status of being a veteran means that the government will pay for their burial. This is not true at all and could cause great financial hardship for families who don't understand it at a time when they are least prepared to deal with it. We emphasize the importance of knowing exactly where the veterans have their discharge papers (DD Form 214). Are they in a secure place known to your spouse or next of kin? Eligibility for potential burial benefits depends on these documents, and they cannot always be obtained quickly from government sources.

To be eligible for burial benefits, a veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. Certain other factors including time period and length of service may apply, so the family should contact the VA at 1-800-827-1000 for final determination of eligibility. **The VA will provide a burial flag, a government marker, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, regardless of where the veteran is buried.**

If burial is to take place in a national or state veterans' cemetery, the cemetery will make the arrangements for the interment only. Neither the cemetery nor the VA makes funeral arrangements or performs cremations.

It is the responsibility of the veteran's family to make arrangements for funeral services with a funeral home, including memorial services, viewings, preparing and transporting the remains, the casket, etc. The VA does not pay for any expenses related to a veteran's burial or funeral.

Certain survivors may apply for a monetary burial allowance paid after-the-fact by the VA, but generally only if the veteran was in receipt of VA disability compensation or pension at the time of death, or if the veteran died while hospitalized by VA or while receiving care under a VA contracted facility. It is definitely wise to check out all these things before it is too late.

Being prepared makes good sense and certainly will take a burden off your loved ones who in sorrow will be tending to your final resting place.

For more information, you can contact the Federal Benefits Unit (FBU) in the American Consulate at [FBU.Frankfurt@ssa.gov](mailto:FBU.Frankfurt@ssa.gov), any claims representative will help. Or you can call one of these numbers: 069-905551-101 (English) OR 069-905551-201 (German).

**Contact Us:** Via telephone at DSN 480-5486 or Civilian 06371-47-5486 (Leave a message if no one is in) or write an e-mail to: [86aw.rao@us.af.mil](mailto:86aw.rao@us.af.mil)

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